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New York

President:	Mr. Gasana	(Rwanda)
Members:	Argentina	Mrs. Perceval
	Australia	Mr. Quinlan
	Azerbaijan	Mr. Mehdiyev
	China	Mr. Tian Lin
	France	Mr. Araud
	Guatemala	Mr. Rosenthal
	Luxembourg	Ms. Lucas
	Morocco	Mr. Loulichki
	Pakistan	Mr. Munir
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Kim Sook
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Togo	Mr. Kandangha-Bariki
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Parham
	United States of America	Ms. Rice

Agenda

The situation in Mali

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali (S/2013/189)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Expression of thanks to the outgoing President

The President: I should like to take this opportunity to pay tribute, on behalf of the Council, to His Excellency Mr. Vitaly Churkin, Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation, for his service as President of the Security Council for the month of March 2013. I am sure I speak for all members of the Council in expressing our appreciation to Ambassador Churkin and his team for the great diplomatic skill with which they conducted the Council's business last month.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Mali

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali (S/2013/189)

The President: Under rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Côte d'Ivoire and Mali to participate in this meeting.

Under rule of 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Jeffrey Feltman, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2013/189, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali.

I now give the floor to Mr. Feltman.

Mr. Feltman: I thank the Security Council for this opportunity to introduce the Secretary-General's latest report on the situation in Mali (S/2013/189), as well as to update the Council on some of the most important political and security developments in the country. Ensuring that the United Nations does its utmost to help Mali resolve the complex crisis it faces today is one of the highest priorities of the Secretary-General. That commitment is reflected in the important work already under way on the ground in Mali — whether political, humanitarian or in support of the security process — as well as in the options presented in the current report.

The most significant development in the political process remains the adoption in January of a road map for the transition, which highlights two priority tasks for the transitional Government, namely, the restoration of territorial integrity and the organization of free and fair elections. The road map also provides for the reform of the armed forces and for dialogue with groups that renounce terrorism and adhere to the unitary nature of Mali and its Constitution.

Furthermore, the transitional Government has established the National Commission for Dialogue and Reconciliation. On 30 March, interim President Dioncounda Traoré appointed Mr. Mohamed Salia Sokona, a former Minister of Defence, as Chair of the Commission, and Ms. Traoré Oumou Touré and Mr. Meti Ag Mohamed Rhissa as its two Vice-Chairs. The appointment of a woman and a Tuareg as vice-chairs of the Commission is consistent with the transitional authorities' repeated assurances that inclusiveness and plurality would be the foundation blocks of the political process moving forward.

The United Nations will provide all the assistance it possibly can to the Commission and will continue to support the mediation efforts by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). In that regard, the United Nations Office in Mali (UNOM) is providing good offices aimed at facilitating contacts between the Government and those groups that wish to take part in the search for a political solution to the crisis, while the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa (UNOWA) continues to coordinate closely with and support regional efforts spearheaded by ECOWAS. In my own conversation with Malian Foreign Minister Coulibaly two days ago, I underscored the Secretary-General's commitment to providing appropriate support to the political process, and to the National Commission in particular, which the Foreign Minister welcomed.

Strengthening the capacity and legitimacy of the State and the political system at all levels remains a key priority for the United Nations and for political leaders in Mali. The coup d'état of 22 March 2012 and the crisis in Mali are, in large measure, manifestations of a crisis of governance that encompasses endemic corruption, weak State capacity to provide basic services and the low level of legitimacy of State institutions and the political system. We hope that a broad and inclusive Malian-led political process can begin to address those long-term challenges that must be overcome for Mali

to achieve long-term political stability and economic prosperity.

While humanitarian access has improved in some parts of the country, the situation remains highly volatile, particularly in Timbuktu and Gao. Currently, more than 470,000 people are estimated to have fled and sought refuge either in Malian host communities or in neighbouring countries. More than 290,000 people are internally displaced, and about 177,000 are refugees in Mauritania, the Niger and Burkina Faso. Some 750,000 people are in need of immediate food assistance, and 660,000 children are at risk of malnutrition in 2013, including 210,000 at risk of severe acute malnutrition. Access to basic social services is limited in particular in the north; in the regions of Timbuktu and Gao, for example, only 50,000 out of 200,000 pupils have access to education.

The United Nations is monitoring the human rights situation, in particular reported serious violations in northern Mali, including summary executions and illegal arrests and the destruction and looting of property. Although arbitrary acts of violence against Tuaregs and Arabs have recently decreased, there is still a risk of reprisal against members of those communities who are alleged to be associated with the armed groups. Worryingly, it appears from reports that new patterns of human rights violations have emerged, including retaliatory attacks based on ethnicity. The Human Rights Council appointed a special rapporteur on Mali earlier this month, and UNOM's human rights team is rapidly expanding, with a view to deploying mobile teams to Mopti, Gao and Timbuktu as soon as security conditions permit. In meetings and conversations with United Nations officials, authorities in Bamako have repeatedly stated their commitment to international human rights standards and practices.

As outlined in the report, there have been significant security improvements in Mali as a result of the French and African military operations alongside the Malian army in northern areas. I want to repeat here the appreciation of the Secretary-General for the rapid and decisive action taken by the French, African and Malian forces. Already by the end of January, State control had been restored in most major northern towns thanks to the efforts of Malians and other African forces, with critical support from French troops. The redeployment of civilian authorities has started in Timbuktu and Gao.

Despite the real and significant gains on the ground stemming from the efforts of French, African, and Malian forces, the security situation remains challenging. Combat continues with armed groups in the Adrar des Ifoghas mountains and in the periphery of some urban centres — Timbuktu, Gao and Kidal. More fighting occurred in Timbuktu this weekend. Humanitarian partners are reporting an increase in criminality around Timbuktu. Armed groups are proving to be mobile in the combat areas, and there have been reported cases of infiltration in urban zones, including Bamako. The continued planting of mines is hampering humanitarian activities, while also endangering civilians.

In the interplay between political and security priorities, it is of critical importance to ensure that the security imperative does not detract from the primacy of politics in Mali, in both the short and long term. In addition to national dialogue, multiple dialogues need to take place between and within communities and between various actors, including the Malian armed forces. Dialogue and reconciliation efforts must also be linked to justice measures to ensure that there is no impunity for the human rights violations that have been perpetrated.

The Head of UNOM, Mr. David Gressly, accompanied by a small team, visited Timbuktu, Gao, Kidal and Tessalit from 29 to 31 March. He met with a wide spectrum of people, the majority of whom expressed a strong desire for constructive dialogue and reconciliation, as well as the demand for accountability for the crimes and abuses committed during the current crisis.

Mr. Gressly learned about the return of the Governors of Timbuktu and Gao, with whom he met. That is an important first step in the restoration of State authority to those regions. According to Malian authorities, that will be followed by the re-establishment of justice and security services, as well as other organs of civil administration at the regional and local levels. We are encouraging the Malian authorities to implement a more rapid deployment of civilian authorities, including of the gendarmerie and civilian police.

As Council Members are aware, President Traoré has indicated the transitional Government's intention to hold elections by 31 July. We are encouraged by President Traoré's commitment to moving rapidly toward elections, a fundamental benchmark in restoring the constitutional order in Mali. In our view, the declarations by leaders of the transitional Government not to stand in those elections further

demonstrate the authorities' commitment to free and fair elections. Mindful of how much work is required to meet the July deadline set by President Traoré, the United Nations has offered its support for the holding of free, fair, transparent and credible polls in keeping with international standards.

We encourage all those committed to an inclusive and fair electoral process to help address some of the conditions required for successful voting. Areas of concern include, on the security side, the still volatile security conditions in northern Mali and, on the political side, the absence so far of reconciliation, which limits space for constructive political debate. We hope that ongoing security operations, as well as the appointment of the National Commission, will help overcome those difficulties and create the essential conditions for credible elections. We agree fully with the Malian authorities that a legitimate Government reflecting the will of Mali's diverse population needs to be in place by the end of 2013, and we encourage continued consultations among Malian actors to achieve that goal. The Secretary-General is firmly committed to the United Nations doing its part to support that objective.

The United Nations has strengthened its support for the planning and preparations for the deployment and operations of the African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA). United Nations military planners have provided planning support to AFISMA, helped in establishing coordination mechanisms, assisted AFISMA and the Malian armed forces in identifying priority needs, and supported the development of key documents for AFISMA, including operational directives, guidelines for the protection of civilians, rules of engagement and a code of conduct. Planning support is also being provided to AFISMA's police component. The United Nations works in close cooperation with the African Union, ECOWAS and other partners in supporting AFISMA, including through coordination mechanisms in both Bamako and Addis Ababa. Support has also been provided to ECOWAS meetings of chiefs of defence staff, aimed at ensuring the eventual smooth transition from AFISMA to a potential United Nations stabilization force.

As Council Members are aware, the Secretary-General deployed a multidisciplinary exploratory mission to Mali from 10 to 16 March to develop recommendations on options for establishing a United Nations peacekeeping operation in Mali. I will highlight the key observations and recommendations that the Secretary-General has made in his report. One is that the serious and interlinked challenges that confront Mali require the concerted and broad-based efforts of the authorities and people of Mali, together with significant international support. They go beyond addressing security threats and require tackling deep-rooted political, governance, development and humanitarian challenges that are not susceptible to any easy solution.

With respect to the security challenges, the report says that a key question is the extent to which the United Nations can or should assume responsibility for security and stabilization, which ultimately will need to serve as an incentive to engage in a viable political process. The report notes that humanitarian actors have raised increasing concerns about the possible deployment of a United Nations force in Mali and the need to retain a clear distinction between the humanitarian and the political/security agendas in order to ensure the impartiality of humanitarian action, avoid threatening the safety of aid workers, and guarantee humanitarian access to all those in need.

The Secretary-General has proposed two options for United Nations engagement in Mali. Under either option, the United Nations would maintain a strong focus on the political aspects linked to the creation of suitable conditions for elections and reconciliation. Under the first option, a United Nations multidimensional, integrated political presence would operate alongside AFISMA. The United Nations would continue its political and human rights activities under a strengthened political mission. The strategic areas of focus under that option would include good offices support for mediation and national and community dialogues, assistance to the electoral process, the promotion of respect for human rights, including with respect to women and children, and support for AFISMA.

Under the first option, AFISMA would be responsible for security, together with bilateral military efforts, in support of the Malian defence and security forces. AFISMA would also have an offensive combat and stabilization mandate focusing on extremist armed groups. The United Nations, in conjunction with other partners, would help build the operational capability of AFISMA through the Trust Fund in support of AFISMA and possibly through a Security Council-authorized logistics support package funded through assessed contributions. In parallel, the European Union

would continue to train the Malian armed forces. Support could also be provided to the Malian defence and security forces through the Trust Fund for Peace and Security in Mali. That option would provide the flexibility for the rehatting of AFISMA to a United Nations peacekeeping operation when the Council decides the conditions are right.

The second option involves the establishment of a United Nations multidimensional, integrated stabilization mission under a Chapter VII mandate, alongside a parallel force. In addition to a political mandate, the mission would carry out security-related stabilization tasks, protect civilians and create the conditions for the provision of humanitarian assistance. The mission would operate under robust rules of engagement with a mandate to use all necessary means to address threats to the implementation of its mandate. That could include the conduct of operations independently of or in cooperation with the Malian defence and security forces.

Under the second option, the bulk of AFISMA would be rehatted under that United Nations stabilization mission. Most of the military, police and civilian components would operate in the north, with a light presence in Bamako. Given the anticipated level and nature of the residual threat, there would also be a fundamental requirement for a parallel force to operate in Mali alongside the United Nations stabilization mission to conduct major combat and counter-terrorism operations and provide specialist support beyond the scope of the United Nations mandate and capability.

These two options can be viewed as phases in the gradual process of transition from the current situation to a United Nations stabilization mission deployed alongside a parallel force. They take into account the fact that the United Nations is operating in a new geopolitical context and faces threats that have not been encountered before in a peacekeeping context. The situation on the ground remains fluid, and extremists and criminal elements continue to pose a significant threat to the safety and security of civilians and United Nations personnel in Mali.

The Secretary-General observes that it will be of crucial importance that

> "clear distinction be maintained between the core peacekeeping tasks of an envisaged United Nations stabilization mission and the peace enforcement and counter-terrorism activities of the parallel force" (*S/2013/189, p.100*).

Any blurring of the distinction would place severe constraints on the ability of United Nations humanitarian, development, human rights and other personnel to safely do their work.

In the same vein, given that the crisis in Mali is part of serious wider regional challenges, it will be essential to coordinate support to Mali within a broader regional strategy that incorporates Mali's neighbours and key partners in the process. The Secretary-General's Special Representative to West Africa, Mr. Said Djinnit, continues to work with countries of the Economic Community of West African States on a shared approach towards the security and political challenges in Mali and beyond. In addition, the regional strategy that the United Nations is leading in developing for the Sahel should be viewed as a complementary and indispensable process. The Secretary-General met with his Special Envoy for the Sahel, Mr. Romano Prodi, on 1 April with respect to the United Nations overall approach to the region, with a focus on what the international community can do to support the people of the Sahel.

In closing, let me note again the Secretary-General's satisfaction with the progress made so far in securing Mali's territorial integrity and his commitment to using the tools of the United Nations to promoting, through a Malian-led process including elections, long-term political stability and economic growth in Mali.

The President: I thank Mr. Feltman for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the representative of Mali.

Mr. Daou (Mali) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, allow me to extend to you, Sir, my heartfelt congratulations upon Rwanda's assumption of the presidency of the Security Council this month. At the same time, I wish you every possible success in the discharge of your lofty burden. I am gratified that this meeting has been convened to consider the Secretary-General's report on the situation in Mali (S/2013/189), pursuant to the implementation of resolution 2085 (2012). I congratulate the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Mr. Jeffrey Feltman, on his outstanding briefing.

Mali welcomes the report, which by and large covers its concerns, and sincerely thanks Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his tireless and praiseworthy

efforts towards a lasting solution to the very serious crisis racking my country. It will be recalled that in a letter dated 12 February 2013 addressed to the Secretary-General, that the interim President of the Republic of Mali, His Excellency Mr. Dioncounda Traoré, underscored the need to configure the international community's presence in Mali through support for the re-establishment of territorial integrity and the restoration of peace and stability in my country. Today, as evidenced by recent developments in the security situation in northern Mali, the goal of the total liberation of the country has not yet been achieved or peace restored.

As emphasized by the report of the Secretary-General, extremist armed groups are resorting to new asymmetric modes of action, such as guerrilla warfare, ambushes, suicide attacks, booby-trapped vehicles, improvised explosive devices, and anti-personnel mines. These armed groups often melt into the local population to commit their crimes. Infiltration attempts by jihadists elements and the offensives of extremist groups have been repeatedly repelled as a result of the vigilance and the determination of the Malian armed forces, backed by French troops and those of the African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA).

The cities of Kidal, Tessalit, Gao, Timbuktu and several other parts of the country that have been targeted by terrorists in recent weeks and months must be secured. On 21 February, some 30 terrorists infiltrated the administrative district of Gao and entrenched themselves in the city hall. Following violent clashes with elements of the Malian armed and security forces, backed by French military forces of Operation Serval, the allied counter-offensive neutralized the terrorist band, some of whose members wore explosive belts.

On 20 March, the village of Dougoumi in the municipality of Ténenkou, in the region of Mopti, was attacked by armed men, resulting in heavy casualties, with about 20 dead and missing from the local population.

On 23 March, Timbuktu was hit in turn by the wave of terrorist attacks, with the explosion of a car bomb and a failed attempt to break into the city airport. On the night of 30-31 March, violent clashes again occurred between the Malian army and jihadists infiltrators in the city centre, with an estimated toll of eight terrorists killed and a Malian non-commissioned officer killed and eight wounded. On 1 April, again in Timbuktu, three jihadists who had managed to successfully infiltrate the city were neutralized.

I could cite many cases of armed violence and subversive actions undertaken by the narco-jihadist groups and their secessionist allies against the unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Mali.

It is clear that these recurrent outbreaks of violence undertaken by Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb, Ansar Dine, Mouvement pour l'unicité et le jihad en Afrique de l'Ouest and the Mouvement national pour la libération de l'Azawad (MNLA) constitute an obstacle not only to the re-establishment of State authority, but also to the return of internally displaced persons and refugees living in neighbouring countries to their homes. The violence is also an obstacle to creating a climate of calm that would allow for the organization of free, transparent and credible elections throughout the national territory, and a threat to the peace and stability of the entire region.

Today more than ever before, the sovereignty and authority of the State of Mali must be in force throughout the national territory from Kayes to Kidal, from Taoudenni to Zégoua, and from Tessalit to Kourémalé. To that end, it is necessary to disarm the MNLA and to take urgent action to bolster the operational capabilities of the armed and security forces of Mali so that they can discharge their duty to protect the population and their property and to defend the national territory threatened by armed terrorists and rebel groups.

I take this opportunity to pay warm tribute to the glorious French soldiers of Operation Serval; to the soldiers of Chad, Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Senegal, Guinea, Ghana, Togo, Benin, the Niger and AFISMA; and to all of those who responded to the calls of Mali, its President and its armed forces and who continue to make a significant sacrifice to preserve the honour and dignity of the Malian people and renew their hope. It is also proper to reiterate here our heartfelt gratitude to the European Union training mission in Mali, which has decided to enlist and train nearly 3,000 Malian soldiers to fight the terrorist groups and defend their country. Finally, we welcome the establishment in Bamako of the United Nations Office in Mali (UNOM), and reiterate our full readiness to work in close cooperation with UNOM and its head, Mr. David Gressly.

Allow me now to say a few words on my country's position on the topic of the transformation of AFISMA

into a peacekeeping stabilization mission. Two options are proposed in the report of the Secretary-General. The Government of Mali prefers the second, which consists of the deployment of a multidimensional, integrated United Nations stabilization mission under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, alongside a parallel force whose objective will be to carry out large-scale anti-terrorism combat operations. The Government of Mali remains convinced that this option will enable it to achieve its objectives of restoring the sovereignty of the Malian State throughout its national territory, stabilizing the country and engaging in national reconciliation efforts.

Part and parcel of that aim is the unanimous adoption by the National Assembly on 29 January of the transitional road map, which provides, inter alia, for re-establishing territorial integrity, organizing free and transparent elections, and creating the National Commission for Dialogue and Reconciliation, which will include all elements and stakeholders of the Malian crisis. An important milestone was achieved on 27 March with the appointment of the Chair and two Vice-Chairs of the Commission by the Head of State of Mali. That clearly shows that no stone will be left unturned by the highest Malian authorities to ensure the effective establishment of the Commission and its successful operation as rapidly as possible.

One of the transitional Government's priorities is the organization of presidential and legislative elections by 31 July at the latest. Despite the many difficulties and complexity of that endeavour, there is reason to hope that the Malians, with the assistance of their partners and the international community, will meet the challenges and turn a new page in their history.

I cannot conclude without extending my gratitude to all countries that pledged their assistance during the pledging conference held in Addis Ababa on 29 January to support AFISMA and the Malian army. I also welcome UNESCO's establishment of a special fund to preserve Mali's global heritage in order to assist the authorities in preserving and protecting property affected by the conflict, in particular the affected sites in Timbuktu and the Tomb of Askia in Gao.

Finally, I would like, on behalf of the Government of Mali, to reaffirm my profound gratitude to all of the members of the Council, to the African Union, to the Economic Community of West African States, and to all our bilateral and multilateral partners for their unanimous support and the special attention they have always devoted to the issue of Mali.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Côte d'Ivoire.

Mr. Bamba (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): I have the honour to take the floor on behalf of the 15 States members of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). In turn, I wish to warmly congratulate you, Sir, on Rwanda's assumption of presidency of the Security Council for the month of April. My country, Côte d'Ivoire, which maintains friendly and brotherly relations with Rwanda, naturally wishes you every success in fulfilling your mandate.

I also thank the Secretary-General for his excellent report on the situation in Mali (S/2013/189) and express my delegation's appreciation for the briefing provided by Mr. Jeffrey Feltman, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs.

As has been underscored by the previous speakers, the situation in Mali has enjoyed positive developments since the launching of Operation Serval. In the military and security domains, the counter-offensive waged by the allied forces was decisive, enabling rapid northward progress to Tessalit. Current efforts seek to launch offensives against the jihadist havens, particularly those located in the Adrars des Ifhogas region and the Niger Strip.

That is why, at its extraordinary meeting held on 25 and 26 March in Yamoussoukro, Côte d'Ivoire, the General Committee of Chiefs of Staff of ECOWAS concluded that it was indispensible that the African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA) be provided as soon as possible with all necessary financial and material resources for its further upscaling and upgrading, in order to enable it to take over from the French forces, which are scheduled to withdraw in the near future. Accordingly, the current transition is of crucial importance, particularly in terms of AFISMA's transformation into a United Nations stabilization operation under Chapter VII of the Charter. In that respect, estimates indicate a need for 11,200 military troops and 1,440 police officers. There is an urgent need to immediately implement the measures necessary to ensure the effective deployment of those troops.

With regard to force generation, and based on the work of a battalion comprising 850 elements, the following countries have committed to providing

infantry battalions: Burkina Faso — one battalion; the Niger — one battalion; Togo — one battalion; Nigeria — one battalion; Chad —two battalions; Sierra Leone — onebattalion; Senegal and Guinea, jointly — one battalion; Côte d'Ivoire — one battalion; and the Gambia — one company for the protection of the force's civilian police. Moreover, we note paragraph 45 of the report of the Secretary-General, that as of 22 March, 6,288 military personnel had been deployed. Therefore, additional efforts are necessary in order to attain 100 per cent deployment as soon as possible in order to ensure AFISMA's efficient transformation into a United Nations stabilization operation under Chapter VII of the Charter.

As we all know, every United Nations peacekeeping operation requires the prior consent of the host State. We are therefore pleased that, in a letter dated 12 February (S/2013/113, annex), addressed to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, the Government of Mali requested the deployment of a United Nations operation in Mali in order to restore the stability, authority and sovereignty of the Malian State throughout its territory. Based on the consent of the Government of Mali, ECOWAS also addressed a letter dated 26 March to the Secretary-General, highly recommending the transformation of AFISMA into a United Nations stabilization operation equipped with a robust mandate. Furthermore, ECOWAS highly recommends, in the framework of the future United Nations force in Mali, the presence of a parallel force equipped with the capacity necessary to rapidly dislodge the groups of terrorists and insurgents.

The objectives contained in resolution 2085 (2012) are still fully relevant, but in the light of recent developments in the situation in Mali their effective achievement now requires us to consider the rapid transformation of AFISMA into a United Nations peacekeeping operation. That is an an inescapable reality. Indeed, ECOWAS believes that Mali urgently needs multidimensional assistance covering the areas of security, peace, humanitarian assistance, support for human rights, support for political dialogue, and the electoral process — all of which can be provided only by a United Nations peacekeeping operation. ECOWAS believes that this option is the most appropriate formula for stabilizing the security situation in Mali in order to create conditions conducive to the swift implementation of the transition road map, including presidential and legislative elections.

With the same concern of stabilizing security in Mali, ECOWAS emphasizes the need to address urgently the issue of the status of the Mouvement national pour la libération de l'Azawad (MNLA). In any event, ECOWAS believes that the MNLA should be disarmed and that the National Commission for Dialogue and Reconciliation, established on 6 March, is the ideal setting for addressing the claims of the MNLA. To that end, the rapid deployment of civil administration in Mali, including judicial and prison services, could contribute significantly to strengthening the rule of law, fighting impunity and installing Government interlocutors in northern Mali who are acceptable both to the international community and to the new peace mission to be established.

In conclusion, and in the light of the foregoing, ECOWAS recommends that the Security Council authorize under Chapter VII of the Charter the transformation of AFISMA into a United Nations stabilization operation, with a robust mandate and a parallel rapid reaction force.

The President: There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.55 a.m.